

VI. LIVING OUR IDEAS

OLD MAXIMS

A good many workers
I've known in my time —
Some builders of houses,
Some builders of rhyme;
And they that were prospered,
Were prospered, I know,
By the intent and meaning of
"Hoe your own row!"

From "Hoe Your Own Row."

Alice Cary.

17. Read a fable, letting the animals or objects think as well as talk. How would these buckets differ in the way they speak, and why?

THE TWO BUCKETS

"How dismal you look!" said a bucket to his companion as they were going to the well.

"Ah!" replied the other, "I was thinking how useless it is for us to be filled; for let us go away ever so full, we always come back empty."

"Dear me! how strange to look at it in that way!" said the other bucket. "Now, I enjoy the thought that, however empty we come, we always go away full."

THE BANNER AND THE CARPET

The royal banner bent his head,
And to the royal carpet said:
"In the palace at Bagdad
Different duties we have had;
Different, too, is our reward,
Though servants both of one great lord.
While the storms beat on my head,
For a queen's feet you are spread.
I, on marches blown and torn,
Into the jaws of death am borne.
You are kept from dust and rains,
Battles, winds, and rents and stains.
Yours, a calm and happy life;
Mine is full of pain and strife."
Then the royal carpet said:

The teacher will observe that the aim here is to awaken dramatic instinct. It usually does not need much awakening; it simply needs to be used as a help in education. Games may be used, and dialogues extemporized from fables and stories, until the children become free and spontaneous.

"You to heaven may lift your head.
I lie here beneath men's feet,
A slave to tread on and to beat;
You, in battle's stormy night,
May lead heroes to the fight."

William R. Alger.

18. Tell a story just as if you were living it over at the moment.

A man blind from his birth asked another who could see, "What is the color of milk?"

The latter replied, "The color of milk is like white paper."

The blind man asked, "Does white, then, rustle in the hands like paper?"

The man who could see replied, "No, it is simply white like a rabbit."

The blind man asked, "Then is it downy and soft like a rabbit?"

The man who could see replied, "No, white is a color exactly like snow."

The blind man then asked, "And is it cold like snow?"

And in spite of all the comparisons that the man who could see made, the blind man was wholly unable to apprehend what the color of milk really was.

Leo Tolstoi.

THE PERT CHICKEN

There was once a pretty chicken;
But his friends were very few,
For he thought that there was nothing
In the world but what he knew:
So he always, in the farmyard,
Had a very forward way,
Telling all the hens and turkeys
What they ought to do and say.

"Mrs. Goose," he said, "I wonder
That your goslings you should let
Go out paddling in the water;
It will kill them to get wet."

"I wish, my dear Aunt Dorking,"
He began to her, one day,
"That you wouldn't sit all summer
In your nest upon the hay.
Won't you come out to the meadow,
Where the grass with seeds is filled?"
"If I should," said Mrs. Dorking,
"Then my eggs would all get chilled."

"No, they won't," replied the chicken;
 "And no matter if they do:
 Eggs are really good for nothing;
 What's an egg to me or you?"

"What's an egg!" said Mrs. Dorking;
 "Can it be you do not know
 You yourself were in an egg-shell
 Just one little month ago?
 And, if kind wings had not warmed you,
 You would not be out to-day,
 Telling hens, and geese, and turkeys,
 What they ought to do and say?"

"To be very wise and show it,
 Is a pleasant thing, no doubt;
 But when young folks talk to old folks,
 They should know what they're about."

Not known.

II

IMPRESSIONS AND HOW CONDITIONS RESPOND TO THEM

VII. IMPRESSION AND THE BODY

Howe'er it be, it seems to me
 'Tis only noble to be good;
 Kind hearts are more than coronets,
 And simple faith than Norman blood.

From "Lady Clara Vere de Vere."

Alfred Tennyson.

19. Suppose you hear a drum and someone cries,
 "Hurrah, the soldiers!" What effect does such a
 sudden surprise have upon your body? What do you
 find your body doing when you give a joyous shout?

Hurrah! hurrah! let us build a snow man as big as a giant.

Some simple surprise can be used which will show the student that the whole body responds before speech. Action is premature language. Nature has a certain order of unfoldment. We may violate this order but we accomplish tenfold when we follow it. The training of the whole body should precede training of the part. Vocal training should precede language training. Great care should be exercised to make the actions of the body spontaneous responses to thinking and feeling — not simply volitional acts.

The first effect of emotion is expansion. The teacher should choose passages illustrating joy, patriotism or such exalted emotion as will stimulate the expansive activity of the body.

20. When you say "Hurrah for the flag!" or give words full of joy and excitement, how is your body affected?

A BOY'S SONG IN SPRING

Hurrah, for the snow is over,
 And the merry brook is free!
 We'll soon sip sweets from the clover
 Along with the bumble-bee.

We'll track the soaring swallow
 As he eddies above the trees,
 And follow him and follow,
 And dream of the things he sees.

We'll watch the insects springing
 Till they seem like roguish elves,
 And hark to the brown thrush singing
 Till we want to sing ourselves.

Hurrah, for the snow is over!
 And Winter, the poor old soul,
 Has gone to play the rover
 On the meadows of the pole.

From "A Boy's Book of Rhyme,"
 G. W. Browning, Clinton, N. Y., Publisher.
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Clinton Scollard.

21. How does patriotism affect the body? What is the difference in effect between courage and fear? What is the difference between an ignoble and a noble emotion? Between tenderness and resolution? Why should we practice selections full of joy, patriotism and exalted emotions?

Breathes there a man with soul so dead,
 Who never to himself hath said,
 "This is my own, my native land?"

Walter Scott.

Oh, and proudly stood she up!
 Her heart within her did not fail:
 She looked into Lord Ronald's eyes,
 And told him all her nurse's tale.

From "Lady Clare."

Tennyson.

The next step is elevation. The two should generally go together, though problems should be given for both—see 21, for elevation. For response of body and voice, see "Foundations of Expression," pp. 61-96; "Mind and Voice," pp. 54-64.

Bright flag at yonder tapering mast,
 Flung out your field of azure blue;
 Let star and stripe be westward cast,
 And point as Freedom's eagle flew!
 Strain home! O lithe and quivering spars!
 Point home, my country's flag of stars!

Nathaniel Parker Willis, 1806-1867.

Where may the wearied eye repose
 When gazing on the Great,
 Where neither guilty glory glows,
 Nor despicable state?
 Yes — one — the first — the last — the best —
 The Cincinnatus of the West,
 Whom envy dared not hate,
 Bequeathed the name of Washington,
 To make man blush there was but one!

Byron.

THE FLAG

Symbol of hope to me and to mine and to all who aspire to be free,
 Ever your golden stars may shine from the east to the western sea;
 Ever your golden stars may shine, and ever your stripes may gleam,
 To lead us on from the deeds we do to the greater deeds that we dream.

Here is our love to you, flag of the free, and flag of the tried and true;

Here is our love to your streaming stripes and your stars in a field of blue;

Native or foreign, we're children all of the land over which you fly,
 And, native or foreign, we love the land for which it were sweet to die.

Denis Aloysius McCarthy.

VIII. HOW IMPRESSIONS CAUSE VOICE

Hark, hark, with what an open throat
 The joyous robin tunes his note!

Adapted from "Spring's Welcome."

John Lyly.

22. How does deep or sudden feeling affect you in giving some exclamatory word, phrase or passage?

Just then the branches lightly stirred —
 See out o' the apple boughs a bird
 Bursts music-mad into the blue abyss!

From "At Dawn."

Edwin Markham.

Away, away, from men and towns,
 To the wild wood and the downs —
 To the silent wilderness
 Where the soul need not repress
 Its music lest it should not find
 An echo in another's mind,
 While the touch of Nature's art
 Harmonizes heart to heart.

Percy Bysshe Shelley.

From "The Invitation."

No; thus I rend thy tyrant's chain,
 And fling him back a boy's disdain!

From "The Polish Boy."

23. The taking of breath and the opening of the tone passage naturally respond to an impression. Do they act separately or together? As two things, or as one?

Awake! arise! and come away!
 Radiant Sister of the Day,
 To the wild woods and the plains,
 And the pools where winter rains
 Image all their roof of leaves.

Percy Bysshe Shelley.

From "The Invitation."

"Oh! mamma, there is a bluebird! Spring is come!"

"A bluebird! Impossible so early in March. You must be mistaken."

"No. Come to the door; you can hear him just as plain!"

Sure enough, on the highest top of the great button-ball tree opposite the house sat the little blue angel singing with all his might — a living sapphire dropped down from the walls of the beautiful city above. A most sanguine and imprudent bluebird he must certainly have been, though the icicles on the eaves of the house were actually commencing to drip. But there undoubtedly he was — herald of good days to come.

The boys and little Dolly ran out, shouting wildly: "Hurrah! There is a bluebird. Spring is coming — spring is coming!"

Yes. Spring was coming; the little bluebird herald was right, though he must have chilled his beak and frozen his toes as he sat there. But he came from the great Somewhere, where things are always bright; where life and summer and warmth and flowers are forever going on while we are bound down under ice and snow.

Harriet Beecher Stowe.

Vocal exercises for young students should be given with great care. The best are simple exclamations full of joy and heartiness. These can be originated by the teacher or taken from poems. Joyous excitement not only expands and lifts the body, but causes the taking of breath, and the opening of the tone passage just before the exclamation. In training children's voices the primary emphasis must always be on the mental action. See "Mind and Voice," pp. 17; 19-31; 45; 59-67.



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